

## INTRODUCTION

The position is located in a field location of the Processed Products Branch, Fruit and Vegetable Programs, Agricultural Marketing Service. The incumbent is an inspector who is responsible for coordinating and/or performing inspection and grading work of processed fruits, vegetables, and related products in processing plants, Field Offices, and/or inspection points. The incumbent may perform lot inspection on a wide variety of products and/or serve as grader-in-charge of a technically complex processing plant.

## II. DUTIES

Draws and examines samples of the finished products and conclusively determines grade, condition, and wholesomeness in accordance with official grade standards, buyer-seller contracts, or other written specifications.

Makes observations to determine if plant facilities, operating methods, and processing equipment and personnel are in compliance with Branch sanitation requirements and FDA regulations. If plant is not in compliance, the grader reports this to plant management and higher Branch officials.

Observes the raw product material to establish the suitability for processing and advises plant management of the results. Takes corrective action, if necessary.

Uses standard and prescribed analytical methods and techniques to make objective determinations that aid in the evaluations of quality factors, determine the degree of wholesomeness, or establish definite characteristics or identity of the product.

Instructs inspectors and aids in proper grading and inspection techniques.

May monitor processing plant operations; product grade evaluation; quality control procedures; and provides technical assistance as necessary.

### III. EVALUATION FACTORS

#### 1. Knowledge Required by the Position (950 points)

Extensive overall knowledge of and skill in applying the official standards, regulations, and specifications to a wide range of processed fruits and vegetables and related products. These products may differ considerably in analytical and subjective characteristics. Also, the grader must demonstrate a thorough understanding of State and other governmental regulations (such as FDA regulations on quality, wholesomeness, standards of identity and labeling) along with various other specifications and requirements in addition to the official standards .

As appropriate, skill in applying numerous processed products inspection methods and procedures and related storage practices and in inspection plant facilities and operations for compliance with required specifications.

Skill in expressing oneself logically and concisely in both oral and written form when rendering decisions.

Skill in establishing rapport and conducting oneself in a tactful and diplomatic manner with industry personnel to maintain good working relations.

#### 2. Supervisory Controls (275 points)

The Officer-in-Charge makes the assignments and defines program objectives.

The employee independently performs the procedures required by the assignment involving technical problems and makes final grade determinations. The employee issues certificates and reports based on inspection records.

The work receives a general review for conformity to usual policies and procedures. Specific work products may be reviewed through occasional checks of worksheets or certificates, or an informal comparison of grade determinations to expected results. Normally, technical proficiency is not reviewed in detail.

#### 3. Guidelines (275 points)

The guides consist of the official U.S. grade standards for processed fruits, vegetables, and related products; regulations pertaining to plant requirements for sanitation and processing; manuals for grading and conducting inspections, and supplemental written and oral instructions for borderline, difficult or unusual situations.

The employee uses discretion in selecting and applying the appropriate guides to a variety of situations and is required to use considerable judgment in the interpretation of standards and

regulations in making borderline grade determinations explaining or advising industry management on USDA requirements or policies. Observes processing methods and advises plant management of their effect on product quality when guidelines are not apparent.

4. Complexity (150 points)

The work consists of grading and inspecting a variety of processed products which may have a multiple number of formulations within a product type. The employee must consider a number of objective and subjective quality factors when inspecting and grading products and evaluating sanitation conditions. The work involves applying standards, regulations, and specifications to determine the grade and/or acceptability of a wide variety of processed products. As appropriate, the incumbent serves as grader-in-charge of a processing plant, which requires review and evaluation of processing procedures, sanitation conditions, etc.

5. Scope and Effect (150 points)

The work involves determining the grade and acceptability of processed fruits and vegetables and related products, inspecting processing facilities for sanitation, and maintaining effective relationships with industry management.

The grading and inspection decisions made by the grader directly affect the financial interests of the buyers or the sellers.

6. Personal Contacts (25 points)

Contacts may include the employees of processing plants and other related industry firms, as well as other Agricultural Commodity Graders and employees of other governmental agencies. The purpose and extent of each contact may be different and many times are under difficult situations.

7. Purpose of Contacts (120 points)

Contacts are to develop and maintain the cooperation of plant management and industry employees and resolve conflicts, to explain grade determinations and related agency policies and regulations, and to advise on or exchange information related to technical matters.

8. Physical Demands (50 points)

Commodity grading work requires periods of physical exertion to lift and move boxes and cartons of product often weighing at least 50 pounds; prolonged periods of standing, walking, stooping,

bending, and climbing; physical coordination and finger dexterity in at least one hand to perform digital examinations of commodities; ability to detect abnormalities in the commodity through normal or corrected vision in at least one eye for distance, depth perception, and color; the ability to assure safety in a highly mechanized and/or noisy environment through adequate or correctable hearing; and the ability to determine product quality through smell and/or taste.

9. Work Environment (20 points)

The work environment includes exposure to freezing temperatures, slippery surfaces, moving materials, handling equipment, high noise level, and similar risks typical of processed fruit and vegetable and related processing plants and storage areas.

TOTAL POINTS - 2015